



# Growing Michigan's Future



A Guide to Marketing  
Your Michigan Food and  
Agriculture Products



## Table of Contents



Direct marketing allows for a direct connection at the point of sale for the producer and consumer.

<b>Introduction</b> . . . . .	i.1
<b>Chapter One: Getting Started</b> . . . . .	1.1
Overview . . . . .	1.2
Selecting a Market that Fits You. . . . .	1.2
The Local Foods Advantage – Why Sell “Local”? . . . .	1.3
Market Options. . . . .	1.3
The Seasonal Nature of Michigan Agriculture . . . . .	1.5
Creating a Business Plan and Budget . . . . .	1.5
Resources for Getting Started . . . . .	1.6
<b>Chapter Two: Direct Marketing – Producer to Consumer</b> . . . . .	2.1
Why Direct Marketing? . . . . .	2.2
Farmers Markets . . . . .	2.3
Community Supported Agriculture. . . . .	2.10
Agricultural Tourism (Agri-tourism) . . . . .	2.13
On-farm Stores, Pick Your Own Operations & Roadside Stands. . . . .	2.18
Wineries in Michigan . . . . .	2.21
Online Marketing. . . . .	2.23
Urban Gardening/Urban Agriculture. . . . .	2.25
<b>Chapter Three: Intermediate Marketing – Producer to Buyer to Consumer</b> . . . . .	3.1
Selling to Intermediate Buyers. . . . .	3.2
Restaurants and Grocery Stores. . . . .	3.6
Processors, Distributors/Wholesalers. . . . .	3.9
Institutional Food Service . . . . .	3.13
Collaborative Marketing . . . . .	3.19





<b>Chapter Four: Market Development</b>	4.1
Overview	4.2
Developing a Marketing Plan	4.2
Marketing Strategies: Branding, Labeling and Third-Party Certification	4.3
Product Promotion	4.7
International Marketing	4.8
Growing/Adapting Production Practices to Supply Your Market	4.9
Value-added Food Processing	4.10
Pricing Products for Various Markets	4.12
 <b>Chapter Five: Food Safety, Licensing and Labeling Regulations</b>	 5.1
Overview	5.2
Licensing and Regulation Requirements	5.2
Food Safety	5.8
Food Liability and Farm Insurances	5.11
State Regulatory Requirements by Product and Market	5.12
Licensing Requirements for Nursery Stock, Christmas Trees and Floriculture Products	5.22
 <b>Appendices, Additional Resources</b>	 a.1

## Introduction

In Michigan and across the nation, the landscape and culture of agriculture is changing. Customers are seeking not only diverse, farm-fresh foods but also a connection to the land on which it is grown. Small and medium-sized farms are on the rise; and growing food is not only happening in our rural areas, but in gardens, greenhouses and farms in our cities and suburbs. Michigan's food and agriculture production and processing markets, and their associated businesses, are ripe for expansion.

Increased consumer demand for locally grown and processed products, combined with a desire to know where our food comes from and an increased focus on health and nutrition, provide opportunities for new and existing producers to succeed in the food and agriculture industry in Michigan. And, with over 200 commodities produced on a commercial basis in our state, Michigan's production resources give our farmers and processors the upper hand in local foods production.

"Growing Michigan's Future – A Guide to Marketing Your Michigan Food and Agriculture Products" is a comprehensive resource for Michigan producers, processors, distributors, local food groups and others interested in expanding and strengthening Michigan's food and agriculture industry. It is meant to be a resource for all food-related businesses, regardless of size, production practices or the diversity of products. From information on how to select a market that best fits an individual farm operation, to food safety, pricing and market development, we hope you will find this guide useful to your business.



Additional copies of this guide are available from:

Michigan Department of Agriculture  
Office of Agriculture Development  
P.O. Box 30017, Lansing, MI 48909  
800-292-3939

This publication is also available electronically at [www.michigan.gov/mdamarketingguide](http://www.michigan.gov/mdamarketingguide). Check for chapter updates.

"Growing Michigan's Future – A Guide to Marketing Your Michigan Food and Agriculture Products" was created using a 2010 U.S. Department of Agriculture Specialty Crop Block Grant.  
First edition, October 2010